

The Relationship of Commitment Practices and Development of the School Leadership Capabilities in Implementing District Education Department (PPD) Transformation

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Abstract

The Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) has launched the District Transformation Program under the sixth agenda of PPPM 2013 – 2025 aimed at enhancing the school's performance by empowering the District Education Department (PPD) and developing professionalism of leaders in schools in an effort to improve the performance of the nation's educational performance. The purpose of this research is to identify the level of commitment practices in implementing the District Transformation Program through three dimensions, which are affective, continuation, and normative, and its relationship to the Development of School Leadership Capabilities in schools. Descriptive survey method was used to gather information on the three-dimensional level of practices in implementing PPD's transformation, whereas an inferential survey was employed to identify the relationship of commitment practices in implementing PPD's transformation with the development of school leadership capabilities. A total of 400 respondents comprising of education services personnel from 13 PPDs in Malaysia were randomly selected. The findings indicate that change of commitment practices for affective commitment dimension is at a high level of practice (min = 4.42; SD = .33), while the continuation commitment dimension (min = 4.14; SD = .42) and normative commitment (min = 4.29; SD = .35) are at a high level. Additionally, the results of the study indicate that the development of school leadership capabilities from the defining dimensions, forming school objectives (min= 4.74; SD=.13), instructional program management dimension (min=4.46; SD=.15), encouraging learning climate dimension (min=4.43; SD=.18), and a friendly and supportive school environment dimension (min=4.42; SD=.11) are at a very high level. The findings also indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between commitment to change practice and Development of the School Leadership Capabilities ($r=.280$; $p=.000$). The findings of this research provide additional information to the stakeholders in developing a framework to increase commitment among teachers, principals, and staff at all educational institutions in order to ensure that such commitment enhances school leadership capabilities.

Keywords: *commitment to change practice, affective, normative, continuation, development of school leadership capabilities*

1. Introduction

In an effort to increase leadership capacity for managing change in education, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has implemented various strategies. Among the strategies include launching of School Performance Development Program (SIP) by listing programs such as school development action plan, ranking and comparing of schools, School Development Expert Trainers (SISC+), and School Development Partner (SIPartner +) to transform the education system in Malaysia through the National Key Results Area (NKRA) GTP 1.0. As the SIP Program involves the process of empowering school leaders toward a more positive change, therefore the continuation in the government focuses on strengthening the District Education Department (PPD) to guide schools in the Government Transformation Program 2.0 (GTP2.0) 2013-2015. Realizing that the importance of the PPD Transformation Program is being able to leverage leadership in schools, SISC+ and SIPartners+ are placed permanently in the State and District Development Programs.

However, in the effort to improve the quality of educational leadership, the biggest challenge is to change the beliefs and culture that influence the way a leader thinks and acts. The Government introduced the National Blue Ocean Strategy in 2012 to help solve the challenges of beliefs and culture by emphasizing creative thinking. In addition, changes in beliefs and culture facilitates organizations to develop high levels of discipline and commitment in cultivating new practices. This statement is in line with the opinion of [5] who stated that organizational members are more motivated and will commit to do more than they should when changes are made to provide a new thinking paradigm. This statement is parallel with the study by [5] that members of the organization are more motivated and will provide commitment in executing a task when changes made develop a new paradigm of thinking. In conclusion, high levels of knowledge, discipline, and commitment are essential in building a world-class education hub, as well as to improve the quality of educational leadership.

2. Purpose and Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to identify the relationship of commitment to change in implementing PPD's transformation from the dimensions of affective commitment, continuation commitment and normative commitment with the development of the school leadership capabilities. Meanwhile, the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To identify the level of commitments in implementing PPD's transformation.
2. To identify the level of development of school leadership capabilities.
3. To identify the relationship between the commitment practices in implementing PPD's transformation and the development of school leadership capabilities.

3. Research Hypothesis

The research hypothesis for the third objective is as follows:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the dimensions of PPD's transformation commitment practice and the development of school leadership capabilities.

4. Methodology

This research involved 400 education service personnel from 13 District Education Department (PPD) in the country that were selected by random sampling method. A questionnaire based on 5-point Likert scale consisting of related items to measure the level of practice of implementing PPD's transformations, the level of development of school leadership capabilities and the relationship between practices of implementing PPD's transformations and the development of school leadership capabilities. The instrument of this study is very reliable because the overall value of Cronbach's Alpha is .915 and has been validated for content validity by three experts. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. This study uses the average mean score interpretation adapted from Jamil Ahmad (2002) to indicate the level of practice in PPD's transformation and the level of development of school leadership capabilities. Meanwhile, Pearson correlation analysis was used to identify the relationship between the practice of implementing PPD's transformation and the development of school leadership capabilities. Prior to the correlation analysis, the researcher also ensured that certain conditions were met such as the distribution of the study data was normal.

5. Results and Discussion

The descriptive analysis of this research includes mean value, frequency, and standard deviation for commitment practice construct in implementing PPD's transformation and the development of the school leadership capabilities. The results of the analysis are discussed based on the research objectives as follows:

5.1. To Identify the Level of Commitments in Implementing PPD’s Transformation

The descriptive analysis identifies the level of commitments in implementing PPD’s transformation including mean value, frequency, and standard deviation. The table below illustrates the mean value, frequency, percentage, and standard deviation, which are based on the findings from analysis of respondents’ feedback on commitment practice component in implementing PPD’s transformation from the dimensions of affective commitment, normative commitment and continuation commitment.

Table 1: Mean Score, Frequency, Percentage and Standard Deviation, Commitment Practice in Implementing PPD Transformation

Commitment Practices Component	Frequency (Percentage)					Mean	Standard Deviation	Score Interpretation
	Mean Score 1.00-1.80	Mean Score 1.81-2.60	Mean Score 2.61-3.20	Mean Score 3.21-4.20	Mean Score 4.21-5.00			
Affective Commitment	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	178 (44.6)	222 (55.4)	4.42	.33	Very High
Continuation Commitment	0 (0)	0 (0)	13 (3.3)	212 (53.1)	175 (43.6)	4.14	.42	High
Normative Commitment	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	231 (57.9)	169 (42.1)	4.29	.35	High
Overall	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	133 (33.6)	267 (66.4)	4.29	.22	High

Based on the findings in Table 1, commitment practices in implementing PPD’s transformation for the dimension of affective commitment is at a very high level, while the dimensions of continuation commitment and normative commitment are at a high level. Affective commitment dimension has the highest mean value (min=4.42; SD=.33), followed by normative commitment (min=4.29; SD=.35) and continuation commitment dimensions (min=4.14; SD=.42), respectively.

The research found that the level of commitment to change practice in Malaysia is high with a mean score of 4.29 (SD=.22). The overall analysis shows that majority of PPD officers, 267 (66.4%) officers practice commitment to change at a very high level (min = 4.21 – 5.00) compared to 133 (33.6%) officers who practice commitment to change at a high level (min = 3.21 – 4.20). This analysis indicates that PPD officers in Malaysia practice commitment to change in implementing transformations of PPD offices.

5.2. To Identify the Level of Development of School Leadership Capabilities

The descriptive analysis to identify the level of development of school leadership capabilities includes mean value, frequency, and standard deviation. The table below illustrates the mean value, frequency, percentage, and standard deviation which are the feedback from the respondents on the components of development of the school leadership capabilities from the dimensions of defining, forming school objectives, instructional program management, encouraging learning climate, as well as forming a friendly and supportive school environment.

Table 2: Mean Score, Frequency, Percentage and Standard Deviation, Development of the overall school leadership capability

Components of the Development of School Leadership Capabilities	Frequency (Percentage)					Mean	Standard Deviation	Score Interpretation
	Mean Score 1.00-1.80	Mean Score 1.81-2.60	Mean Score 2.61-3.20	Mean Score 3.21-4.20	Mean Score 4.21-5.00			
Defining Forming School Objectives	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	400 (100.0)	4.74	.13	Very High
Instructional Program Management	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.3)	399 (99.7)	4.46	.15	Very High
encouraging learning climate	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	48 (12.0)	352 (88.0)	4.43	.18	Very
Establishing a friendly and supportive school environment	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	40 (16.0)	360 (90.0)	4.42	.22	Very High
Overall	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.3)	399 (99.7)	4.51	.11	Very High

Based on the findings in Table 2, the development of school leadership capabilities in term of defining, forming school objectives, instructional program management, promoting a learning climate, as well as establishing a friendly and supportive school environment are illustrated. The defining and forming school objectives dimensions show the highest score (min= 4.74; SD=.13), followed by instructional program management dimension (min=4.46; SD=.15), promoting a learning climate dimension (min=4.43; SD=.18) and establishing a friendly and supportive school environment dimension (min=4.42; SD=.11), respectively.

The findings of the research indicate that the level of the development of school leadership capabilities in Malaysia has a high mean score of 4.51 (SD=.11). The overall analysis show that the majority of PPD officer, 399 (99.7%) officers perform the transformation of PPD at a very high level (min=4.21 – 5.00) compared to only one officer (0.3%) that performs the transformation at a high level (min=3.21 – 4.20). This analysis shows that the efforts undertaken by the PPD officers in Malaysia, in the development of school leadership capabilities is very high.

5.3. To Identify the Relationship Between the Commitment Practices in Implementing PPD Transformation and the Development of School Leadership Capabilities

The research hypothesis for the third objective is as follows:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between the dimensions of PPD transformation commitment practice and the development of school leadership capabilities.

To identify the relationship between the two variables, Pearson correlation analysis was employed. The research analysis presented in this section deals with the relationship between commitment practices in implementing PPD’s transformations from the dimensions of affective commitment, continuation commitment and normative commitment, and the development of school leadership capabilities. The results of Pearson correlation analysis r related to the relationship between commitment to change practices and the development of school leadership capabilities are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between commitment practices in implementation PPD transformation and development of the school leadership capabilities

		Commitment to Change Practices	Development of the School Leadership Capabilities
Commitment to Change Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.280**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	400	400
Development of the School Leadership Capabilities	Pearson Correlation	.280**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	400	400

Table 4: The relationship between the dimensions of commitment to change practices in implementing PPD transformation and the development of school leadership capabilities

Commitment to Change Practices		r	Variance r ²	Sig. (p)	Relationship Level
Affective Commitment	Development of the School Leadership Capabilities	.397**	.158	.000	Moderate
Continuation Commitment	Development of the School Leadership Capabilities	-.133**	.018	.008	Weak
Normative Commitment	Development of the School Leadership Capabilities	.330**	.109 018	.000	Continuation

Based on the above analysis, there is a significant weak negative relationship between commitment to change practices through continuation commitment and development of the school leadership capabilities. Furthermore, it was also found that there was a moderate significant relationship between commitment to change practices through affective commitment dimension and normative commitment dimension with the development of school leadership capabilities.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this research support the studies by [4], as well as by [7] whereby teacher's commitment is lowly proportional with transformational leadership practices. Moreover, the research is also parallel with the studies by [6], as well as [1] which show positive relationship between leadership and teacher's commitment to change. Meanwhile, the study by [8] also found a significant relationship between leadership and organizational commitment at the District Education Office.

The findings of this research show that there is a relationship between commitment to change practices in implementing PPD's transformation from the dimensions of affective commitment, continuation commitment and normative commitment, and the development of school leadership capabilities. Thus, the findings are able to fill the gaps from the aspect of relevant information between both the variables. In addition, the findings also provide additional information to stakeholders to draft relevant action plan to increase commitment among teachers, principals, and staff at all educational institutions to ensure that such commitment enhances school leadership capabilities.

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